

Norton College (Tewkesbury) Limited

Launchpad, Shannon Way, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire GL20 8UQ

Inspection dates

1 November 2018

Overall outcome

The school is unlikely to meet all the independent school standards when it opens

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 2(1), 3, 4

- Leaders have drafted a curriculum policy which, if fully implemented, will give pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education. Leaders intend to offer a curriculum which is bespoke to each pupil's interests and their special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. A wide range of qualifications have been identified which teaching staff can use to ensure that pupils are prepared well for their next steps in education or employment. These include entry level, functional skills, GCSE, A-level and vocational qualifications in subjects ranging from mathematics to home cooking.
- The proprietor has identified a specialist careers leader from the proposed school's sister site to ensure that pupils have access to careers information, advice and guidance. Working with placing authorities, leaders anticipate involving other specialist advisers to ensure impartiality.
- Leaders have identified a systematic synthetic phonics approach to use with pupils who have poor linguistic skills, and a member of staff is suitably trained and experienced in this.
- The school's assessment policy sets out both formative and summative approaches to assessing pupils' progress. This is supplemented by assessment against examination board criteria for those courses which may lead to accredited qualifications for pupils.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraph 5

- Leaders have planned opportunities to ensure that pupils can explore and develop their own values, beliefs and spiritual awareness. The school's vision and values to take pupils 'on a journey from hopelessness to hopefulness and from dependence through to independence' confirm the proprietor's intended priority to develop pupils' self-esteem, resilience and reflectiveness.

- Leaders have designed a programme to capture opportunities to discuss current affairs and draw in cultural differences throughout the taught and informal curriculum. For example, through computer gaming, pupils consider world faiths and religions, the difference between right and wrong and their responsibilities as citizens. Visits to places of worship, such as mosques and churches, are planned.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)

- The proprietor has ensured that a written safeguarding policy is in place. The policy reflects the latest statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State. The designated safeguarding leader has been appropriately trained. The two deputy-designated safeguarding leaders are scheduled to complete their training later this month. Leaders are aware of the need to develop their understanding of the specific procedures of placing local authorities.
- Leaders have not ensured that the school's recruitment procedures are suitably robust to meet the requirements as set out in 'Keeping children safe in education' (2018). Gaps in the employment history of applicants have not been thoroughly evidenced, references do not comply with the requirements of statutory guidance and medical fitness checks have not yet been carried out. The single central record has missing details and errors, and so is not maintained to an acceptable standard.
- The standard in this paragraph is not likely to be met.

Paragraphs 9, 10, 12–16(b)

- Leaders have developed a 'student code of conduct' which sets out the leaders' expectations of pupils' behaviour, sanctions and rewards. Separate policies are in place to deal with exclusions and bullying.
- The proprietor has engaged a specialist fire and security firm to carry out a fire-risk assessment. This was carried out on the day prior to the inspection. Remedial work to address any shortcomings have been completed. Fire blankets and extinguishers have been installed and tested.
- The proprietor has produced a first-aid policy. First-aid kits are well stocked, and staff who will be first aiders have either had training recently or are booked on training courses in the coming weeks.
- Leaders intend there to be a high staff-to-pupil ratio to ensure that supervision arrangements are adequate. Risk assessments are in place that identify hazards, the likelihood of the risk occurring, the potential severity of any incident and the control measures that leaders intend to take to minimise or eradicate any hazards.
- The proprietor has devised an admissions register and attendance registers that include the necessary detail, as set out in the requirements of the 'Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations'.
- The standards in these paragraphs are likely to be met.

Paragraph 11

- The proprietor has drafted a health and safety policy that is detailed and incorporates arrangements for risk assessment. The building is maintained to a good standard. Gas safety checks were carried out in August 2018. However, no valid electrical installation certification was able to be provided during the inspection. Therefore, the electrical safety of the building cannot be guaranteed.
- The standard in this paragraph is not likely to be met.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

Paragraphs 18(2)–18(3), 21(3)–21(3)(b)

- The proprietor has not ensured that all the necessary checks on members of staff have been completed prior to their appointment. Leaders have not ensured that staff who have started in their posts are not prohibited from working in a school. Some members of staff who have taken up their posts do not have an enhanced criminal record check or additional checks for periods spent living outside the United Kingdom. The proprietor has introduced a medical questionnaire to assess the medical fitness of employees, but staff have yet to complete these.
- The single central record does not contain the required details of the checks and some information recorded is inaccurate.
- The standards in these paragraphs are not likely to be met.

Paragraph 19

- The proprietor does not intend to use agency staff.

Paragraph 20

- The proprietor is a private limited company represented by four directors. All the necessary checks to ensure that each director is a suitable person have been completed. The details of these checks are included in the single central register.
- The standard in this paragraph is likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 22–24(3), 26–29(1)(b)

- Leaders have leased a former vocational training centre from which the proposed school will operate. The building is well appointed, with separate toilet and showering facilities for boys, girls, staff and visitors. Many of these are equipped for people who have disabilities. A dedicated medical room provides accommodation for the short-term care of sick pupils, medical examination and treatment.
- Ample outlets are available in communal areas for pupils to access drinking water throughout the school day.
- The lighting, heating, ventilation and acoustics are suitable for the purpose for which each room is intended. Hot water is provided and regulators ensure that the water temperature does not pose a scalding risk to pupils.
- Outdoor spaces adjacent to the building and the large internal hall provide sufficient facilities for physical education and spaces for pupils to play.
- The standards in these paragraphs are likely to be met.

Paragraph 25

- Although the proprietor has ensured that the decoration and furnishings of the building are maintained to a satisfactory standard, the quality of the electrical wiring cannot be assured. Therefore, the health, safety and welfare of the pupils cannot be guaranteed.
- The standard in this paragraph is not likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1)–32(3)(f)

- The proprietor has documentation available in hard copy for parents, carers and others on request. It includes all the information required in this part of the standards. A contractor has been engaged to develop a website. Once the website has been constructed, leaders intend to upload the required documentation.
- All the information requested by inspectors was provided by leaders during this inspection, including template documents regarding pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and children looked after.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33

- The proposed school is likely to meet the standard in this part. The complaints procedure clearly sets out the steps a complainant should follow, the timescales for each stage and the details a complainant should expect to receive at the end of each stage.
- The proprietor has arrangements in place for an independent person to form part of a panel that will hear any complaints.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1)–34(1)(c)

- The directors have not ensured that all the independent school standards are likely to be met. They have not yet assured themselves that all the health and safety checks for the premises have been carried out.
- Leaders have not demonstrated a thorough understanding of the requirements for the recruitment of staff set out in 'Keeping children safe in education' (2018). Missing checks mean that they cannot confirm that all staff who have been appointed are suitable to work with pupils.
- The standard in this part is not likely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- Leaders are conscious of the wide range of SEN that potential pupils may have. They have given adequate consideration to these needs when setting out the vision of the school and in designing the curriculum.

- The building is fully accessible to pupils who have disabilities.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school is unlikely to meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements, as set out in the annex of this report.

Proposed school details

Unique reference number	146519
DfE registration number	916/6021
Inspection number	10081585

This inspection was carried out under section 99 of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards that are required for registration as an independent school.

Type of school	SEN day school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Crucible Education Limited
Chair	Edward Morris
Headteacher	Ian Hardicker
Annual fees (day pupils)	£40,000
Telephone number	01684 273 999
Website	No website
Email address	ian.hardicker@nortoncollege.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	11–19	11–19
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	40	40

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Not applicable	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	Not applicable	40

Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	40
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	40
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	40

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	7	16
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	0	5

Information about this proposed school

- The proposed special school is situated in a former vocational training centre located in an industrial estate in Tewkesbury. The site includes the main school building, a yard and a multi-use games area.
- Leaders anticipate that all pupils who will join the school once open will have an education, health and care plan. The school is equipped to cater for pupils who have social, emotional and mental health needs, communication and interaction needs, moderate learning difficulties and/or autism spectrum disorder.
- The school is owned by Crucible Education Limited. The proprietor currently runs Norton College in Worcester. One of the four directors also fulfils the role of headteacher.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was conducted by Ofsted at the request of the Secretary of State for Education. It was carried out under section 99 of the Education and Skills Act 2008.
- This was the first pre-registration inspection.
- The inspector held discussions with two directors, one of whom is also the headteacher, and the deputy headteacher. The inspector contacted the school's fire safety adviser by telephone.
- The inspectors undertook a check of the premises, evaluated the policies required under the independent school standards and other documents, and checked the single central register.
- No pupils were present during this inspection.

Inspection team

Iain Freeland, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school is unlikely to meet the following independent school standards

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 11 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 25 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

- 18(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
 - 18(2)(a) no such person is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act where that person is or will be engaging in activity which is regulated activity within the meaning of Part 1 of Schedule 4 to that Act;
 - 18(2)(b) no such person carries out work, or intends to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act, or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction;
 - 18(2)(c) the proprietor carries out appropriate checks to confirm in respect of each such person-
 - 18(2)(c)(ii) the person's medical fitness;
 - 18(2)(d) the proprietor ensures that, where relevant to any such person, an enhanced criminal record check is made in respect of that person and an enhanced criminal record certificate is obtained before or as soon as practicable after that person's appointment;
 - 18(2)(e) in the case of any person for whom, by reason of that person living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining such a certificate is not sufficient to establish the person's suitability to work in a school, such further checks are made as

the proprietor considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State; and

- 18(3) The checks referred to in sub-paragraphs (2)(c) and (except where sub-paragraph (4) applies) (2)(e) must be completed before a person's appointment.
- 21(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is-
 - 21(3)(a)(ii) a check was made to establish whether S is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act;
 - 21(3)(a)(iii) a check was made to establish whether S is subject to any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction;
 - 21(3)(a)(v) an enhanced criminal record certificate was obtained in respect of S;
 - 21(3)(a)(vi) checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(d);
 - 21(3)(a)(viii) checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(e),
 - 21(3)(b) in relation to each member of staff ('S'), whether a check was made to establish whether S is subject to a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order, including the date on which such check was completed.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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Store Street
Manchester
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